

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0010

INFO USLO PEKING

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

C O N F I D E N T I A L HONG KONG 3093

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2

TAGS: PINR, CH

SUBJ: PRC SECURITY OVER INTERNAL PUBLICATIONS TIGHTENS

SUMMARY. RECENT INFORMATION INCLUDING REPORT OF ARREST BY PRC BORDER GUARDS OF A MAN CARRYING PROVINCIAL PAPERS OUT OF CHINA, REFLECTS PEKING'S HEIGHTENED CONCERN OVER MEDIA LEAKS IN THE MIDST OF ITS CURRENT POLITICAL CONTROVERSIES. END SUMMARY

1. CONGEN FSL INVOLVED IN PROCUREMENT MATTERS HAS JUST LEARNED THROUGH ONE HONG KONG PUBLICATIONS DEALER THAT A MAN WHO REGULARLY BRINGS NAN FANG DAILY (NFD), KWANGTUNG PROVINCE'S PROVINCIAL NEWSPAPER, INTO HONG KONG FOR RESALE ON THE LOCAL MARKET, WAS RECENTLY APPREHENDED AT THE BORDER BY PRC GUARDS, ACCORDING TO WITNESSES CROSSING AT SAME TIME. HE WAS BELIEVED TO BE CARRYING ABOUT TEN ISSUES OF THE NFD.

THIS IS THE FIRST REPORTED INTERCEPTION IN RECENT YEARS AND, TOGETHER WITH OTHER INFORMATION WE HAVE BEEN RECEIVING, IT SUGGESTS THAT PEKING'S BORDER PATROLS ARE TIGHTENING SECURITY AGAINST REMOVAL OF PERIODICALS AND PAPERS NOT MEANT TO
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CIRCULATE OUTSIDE CHINA.

2. FSL ALSO REPORTS THAT A MEMBER OF A LEFTWING PUBLISHING HOUSE HERE, WHO PREVIOUSLY BROUGHT OUT RESTRICTED JOURNALS, IS NOW RELUCTANT TO DO SO AND HIS PRC CONTACTS ARE SIMILARLY RELUCTANT TO PASS THEM TO HIM. ALSO, DEALERS HAVE RECENTLY REPORTED THAT THERE HAS BEEN A GENERAL TIGHTENING UP OF SURVEILLANCE IN PORT CITIES LIKE SHANGHAI AND TIENTSIN WHERE FOREIGN SHIPS VISIT.

3. WE HAVE HEARD FROM A NUMBER OF SOURCES THAT THE SHANGHAI JOURNAL STUDY AND CRITICISM HAS BECOME INCREASINGLY DIFFICULT TO BUY, BOTH IN SHANGHAI OR PEKING. LOCAL DEALERS ALSO SAY THIS JOURNAL IS NOT AVAILABLE IN CANTON. THIS AGAIN RAISES THE MATTER OF HANDLING THIS SENSITIVE JOURNAL. WE KNOW THE JOURNAL IS NOT AVAILABLE FROM CHINA BUT WE WERE RATHER SURPRISED TO HEAR THAT SOME BOOKSTORES HERE WERE OFFERING XEROX COPIES OF THIS JOURNAL, WITH THESE COPIES HAVING BEEN PURCHASED FROM WASHINGTON, DC. WE NOTE IN THE JANUARY ISSUE OF THE NEWSLETTER FROM THE CENTER FOR CHINESE RESEARCH MATERIALS IN WASHINGTON THAT THIS JOURNAL IS BEING OFFERED FOR SALE AT \$5.30 PER XEROX ISSUE AND \$4.50 PER ROLL OF MICROFILM. IF THE CENTER HAS BEEN OBTAINING STUDY AND CRITICISM THROUGH US GOVERNMENT CHANNELS, THEN AGAIN WE URGE MORE RESTRICTIVE HANDLING OF THIS IMPORTANT JOURNAL, WHICH IS BECOMING EVER MORE DIFFICULT TO OBTAIN.
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